

REMARKS

1. Claims 1-28 are pending in this application. Reconsideration and further prosecution of the above-identified application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and discussion that follows.

2. Claims 1-28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Pat. Appl. No. US 2004/0213538 to Trezza et al. In response, independent claims 1 and 12 have been further limited to a "a plurality of discrete refracting or reflecting elements". In this regard, a plurality of discrete refracting or reflecting elements are shown in FIGs. 5-10.

Independent claim 1 has also been limited to a "plurality of refracting or reflecting elements selected to reflect light away from the plurality of refracting or reflecting elements to thereby confine the optical beam to the axis of transmission". Independent claims 12, 26-28 contain similar limitations.

Support for reflection of light away from the apertures may be found within paragraph [0037] of the specification. Support for confining the optical signal to the axis of transmission may be found within paragraph [0033] of specification.

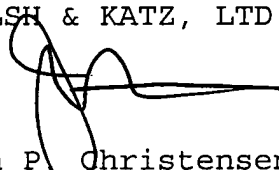
In contrast, Trezza et al. is directed to a connector 100 having low precision pieces 500 or high precision pieces 804. Trezza et al. differs from the invention because the holes 702 of Trezza et al. each include an optical fiber and function to couple light from one fiber to another fiber. In contrast, the claimed invention is now limited to discrete apertures that reflect light away from

the apertures. Since Trezza et al. cannot meet at least this limitation, Trezza et al. fails to teach each and every claim limitation. Since Trezza et al. fails to teach each and every claim limitation, the rejection is now improper and should be withdrawn.

3. Allowance of claims 1-28, as now presented, is believed to be in order and such action is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, he is respectfully requested to telephone applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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January 26, 2006
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